



USAID Avian Influenza Program

Key Preventive Messages on Human-to-Human Transmission of Avian Influenza

Although rare, instances of limited human-to-human transmission of H5N1 and other avian influenza viruses have occurred in association with outbreaks in poultry. These should not be cause for alarm, however, as in these few cases transmission required very close contact with an ill person. To help eliminate the already small risk of human-to-human transmission of avian influenza, you can take the following steps:

Practice good hygiene at home and in public.

- Wash your hands often with ash, soap and water, or hand sanitizers.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you have any symptoms of respiratory illness, including a bad cold.

Learn the signs and symptoms of avian influenza in humans, and know what to do if you think you have avian flu.

- The reported symptoms of avian influenza in humans have ranged from typical influenza-like symptoms (such as fever, cough, sore throat, and muscle aches) to eye infections (conjunctivitis), pneumonia, acute respiratory distress, viral pneumonia, and other severe and life-threatening complications.
- If you suspect that someone has avian influenza, take them to a health care provider immediately.
- Contact your [INSERT LOCAL OR NATIONAL HEALTH ORGANIZATION] for additional guidance.